

SENATE TAXATION

EXHIBIT NO. 3

DATE 2.13.09

BILL NO. SB 304



February 12, 2009

To the members of the Senate Taxation Committee

I am writing this letter in support of SB 304, the Keep Our Kids Here tax credit.

In reviewing this proposed legislation, and talking about it with Bozeman-area employers, there was great excitement. Employers constantly are looking for the best available talent, and they readily acknowledge that Montana natives and graduates from the Montana University System make excellent hires. These employers also acknowledge that they are at a competitive disadvantage due to the combination of student loan debt and job offers higher than Montana-based companies, and often lose a talented young person.

While the majority of Montana State University graduates do end up staying in state, this proposed legislation offers a chance to keep even more students here, and repay the investment made by the Legislature and the taxpayers of Montana.

The best and the brightest graduates can help future generations of businesses to be the best and the brightest as well.

I encourage a do-pass vote on SB 304 – for our students and our businesses.

Warm regards

David Smith
President/CEO
Bozeman Area Chamber of Commerce